



Maldives Protected & Conserved Areas Forum 2024

Maldives Protected and Conserved Areas Forum 2024

Forum Report

15–18 January 2024



Ministry of Climate
Change, Environment
and Energy

Executive summary

The first Maldives Protected and Conserved Area (PCA) Forum took place at Crossroads resort on 15–17 January 2024, followed by a local MPA manager day on 18 January. The event was attended by approximately 85 people across days 1 to 3, with an additional 40 people joining for the Conference Closing Ceremony and meal on 17 January. The local MPA manager day held on 18 January was attended by approximately 30 people.

The Forum brought together those working on Protected and Conserved Areas across Maldives to share and exchange knowledge, explore synergies and opportunities to work together, and provide a platform to learn from global partners. The event was organised by the Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy, with assistance from the UK Government's Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCP), and additional support provided by International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

A combination of presentations and breakout sessions took place across the four days of the Forum starting on day one with a focus on the global context of PCAs. This laid the foundation for discussions in the following days by providing an overview of international targets for PCAs, including target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the IUCN Green List Standard, the emerging conservation approach of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) and an overview of Maldives work on 30x30. International delegates shared their experiences in implementing PCAs from their respective countries including Thailand, Canada, Seychelles, Korea and the UK. A breakout session to inform the development of a roadmap to 30x30 for Maldives was held where attendees discussed progress so far, challenges and actions needed to realise the full potential of 30x30 for Maldives.

The second day of the Forum focused on the national context of PCAs, providing a platform for existing projects related to PCAs in Maldives to share their work. This was followed by a session focused on the different stages of PCA implementation from designation to management, monitoring and enforcement. Attendees contributed to a breakout session to share views around the priorities for effective management, monitoring and the integration of climate change into decision making. The third day of the Forum highlighted sustainable financing mechanisms, sharing a range of case studies. A breakout session to explore existing mechanisms and sustainable financing opportunities for Maldives was held before the final session of the day which focused on the role of wider stakeholders in PCAs.

A closing ceremony attended by the Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Energy, Thoriq Ibrahim, Minister of Cities, Local Government and Public Works Adam Shareef Umar, British High Commissioner to the Maldives Caron Röhler, and IUCN Regional Director, Dr Dindo Campilan and stakeholders, was held to commemorate the success of the Forum. Several announcements were made during the event, including the inauguration of government pledges, and an open call for proposals for additional Nature Parks and Biosphere Reserves in Maldives. Minister Ibrahim launched the new Protected and Conserved Area website for Maldives and the Protected and Conserved Area Handbook, which provide publicly accessibly

information on the different protected areas around Maldives. The website and handbook were funded by the OCPP and can be accessed at <https://protectedareas.environment.gov.mv>. Six new fully funded Masters marine science scholarships granted by the OCPP were also awarded by Minister Ibrahim and High Commissioner Röhslar. This scholarship aims to support scientific research to contribute to the conservation and sustainable management of marine resources and strengthen responses to marine environmental challenges. An announcement was also made regarding Maldives becoming the co-chair of the Asia Protected Areas Partnership (APAP).

The final day of the Forum was held for local PCA managers only and provided an opportunity for the different Biosphere Reserve teams to connect and learn from one another. Each Biosphere Reserve presented on their experiences before undertaking a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis to identify priorities, synergies, and lessons learnt. The OCPP team also provided Protected Area Management Effectiveness (PAME) training and validated the 'Maldives National Framework for Management of Protected and Conserved Areas 2023-2028' and 'Maldives National Management Plan Guidance for Protected and Conserved Areas' with attendees.

Discussions from the Forum have been summarised in this report and will inform the development of a roadmap to guide Maldives in reaching its 30x30 ambitions.

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1 Introduction

The Maldives Protected and Conserved Areas Forum 2024 brought together those working on Protected and Conserved Areas across Maldives to share and exchange knowledge, explore synergies and opportunities to work together, and provide a platform to learn from global partners. It was the first of its kind and organised and hosted by the Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy (MoCCEE), with assistance from the UK Government's Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCPP) and additional support provided by International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

This report provides a summary of the Forum, the programme, outputs of breakout sessions and summaries of presenter Q&As. PDFs of all presentations are available at: [PCA Forum Presentations](#) (One Drive (sharepoint.com)).

1.1 Aims

The PCA Forum took place at [Crossroads Resort](#), near Malé on 15–17 January 2024. A local MPA manager day was held on 18 January.

The aims of the Forum were to:

1. Share knowledge from global and national context to strengthen the national performance towards the achievement of *The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*.
2. Share experiences from existing projects for synergizing and seeking opportunities for future collaborative action towards protected and conserved areas in the Maldives.
3. Initiate discussions towards national actions and roadmap for achieving Target 3 of the *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*.
4. Strengthen the capacity of protected and conserved area managers across the Maldives.

2 Programme

2.1 Day 1: The Global Context of PCAs

Time	Description	Speaker
07:45	Boat travel from Malé to Cross Roads	
08:15	Refreshments	
09:00	Conference welcome	Muhusina Abdul Rahman, MoCCEE Beth Flavell, OCPP
09:15	Ice breaker activity	Saaif Mohamed Rasheed, MoCCEE
09:35	Overview of Maldives national PCA context	Muhusina Abdul Rahman, MoCCEE
The global context – moderated by Ms Lisama Sabry		
10:05	Global threats to marine environments	Pete Chaniotis, JNCC
10:20	Overview of international targets for MPAs	Pete Chaniotis, JNCC on behalf of Farah Chaudry and Jess Dark, Defra
10:40	Global context on OECMs	Mohammad Khalid Sayeed Pasha, IUCN
10:55	Overview of Green list process	Mohammad Khalid Sayeed Pasha, IUCN and Charlie Dryden, IUCN
11:10	Q&A Panel session to speakers	
11:30	Lunch	
12:30	Overview of Maldives work on 30x30	Lisama Sabry, MoCCEE
12:40	30x30 experience from Thailand	Wanlop Preechamart, ONEP
12:55	Breakout session on Roadmap to 30x30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you feel Maldives has achieved in progress towards achieving 30x30 so far? • What do you hope 30x30 will achieve? • How do we get from where we are to where want to be? • What are the challenges/ barriers? • What action can we identify to address these? Prioritise actions • How do we achieve this in socially and culturally inclusive way 	All
14:15	Break	
Global experiences – moderated by Beth Flavell		
14:45	Experience from Canada	Jason Boire, Parks Canada
15:05	Experience from Korea	Dr Bohyun Kim and Ms Sunjoon Park, Korea National Parks Service
15:25	Experience from the UK	Pete Chaniotis, Joint Nature Conservation Committee
15:45	Experience from Seychelles	Allen Cedras, Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority

16:05	Panel Q&A session and audience discussion around how these lessons learnt could be applied to Maldives	
16.45	Day 1 close	
17:00	Boats travel from Cross Roads to Malé	

2.2 Day 2: The National Context of PCAs

Time	Description	Speaker
07.45	Boat travel from Malé to Cross Roads	
08:15	Refreshments	
9:00	Day 2 welcome and opening	Muhusina Abdul Rahman, MoCCEE
9:15	Icebreaker	Saaif Mohamed Rasheed, MoCCEE
Existing PCA projects – moderated by Muhusina Rahman		
09:30	Noo Raajje project	Fathimath Nistharan, Noo Raajje
09:40	The Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCP)	Beth Flavell, OCPP
09:50	USAID Climate Adaptation Project, Maldives	Fathimath Thasneem, USAID-CAP
10:00	UNDP	Thuhufa Abdulla, UNDP
10:10	ENDhERI	Mariyam Rifga, MoEECC
10:20	CATENATE	Aishath Amal, MoCCEE
10:30	Other collaborations and pipeline projects	Aishath Amal, MoCCEE
10:40	Panel Q&A discussion	
11:45	Lunch	
Maldives PCAs – moderated by Fazeela Shaheem		
12:45	PCA Designation	Fazeela Shaheem, MoCCEE
13:05	PCA Management	Mariyam Rifga, MoCCEE, Sarah Allison, OCPP and Jamie Small, OCPP
13:25	PCA Monitoring – Monitoring Framework	Enas Mohamed Riyaz, EPA, Tammy Noble-James, OCPP
13:45	PCA Compliance and Enforcement	Enas Mohamed Riyaz, EPA
14:05	Developing climate smart MPAs	Lauren Wensel, NOAA
14:25	Break out session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the priorities for effective PCA management, and what is needed to help deliver? What are priorities for effective PCA environmental monitoring, and what is needed to help deliver? What steps can we take to integrate climate change into PCA decision making? 	
15:10	Break	
15:30	Marine lab and cultural centre visit	
16:45	Day 2 close	
17:00	Boats travel from Cross Roads to Malé	

2.3 Day 3: Support PCA Implementation in Maldives

Time	Description	Speaker
07:45	Boat travel from Malé to Cross Roads	
08:15	Refreshments	
9:00	Day 3 welcome and opening	Muhusina Abdul Rahman, MoCCEE
Sustainable Financing for PCAs – Moderated by Muhusina Abdul Rahman		
09:15	Introduction to sustainable financing	Melissa Garvey, The Nature Conservancy
09:30	Establishing sustainable financing in Maldives	Lan Thi Thu Nguyen, World Bank
09:45	WWF experience of sustainable financing of MPAs from Belize	Juliet Neal and Osmany Salas, WWF
10:00	Case Study: Sustainable financing to support Green List processes	Siska Sihombing, IUCN
10:15	Breakout session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What existing mechanisms are there for generating sustainable financing in Maldives? • How well are these working and what would need to improve to enable them to provide long-term financing for PCAs? • Which of the examples provided by the speakers is of most interest? • What lessons learnt from these examples could be applied to Maldives? • What would need to be done? 	
11:30	Lunch break	
The role of wider stakeholders in PCAs – moderated by Pete Chaniotis		
12:30	Integrating stakeholder engagement into PCA decision making	Muhusina Abdul Rahman, MoCCEE
12:45	Something around decentralisation and the role of councils in PCAs	Fazeela Shaheem, MoCCEE
13:00	Overview of the OECM process in Maldives	Hawwa Junainath, MoCCEE
13:20	The role of NGOs in PCA management and monitoring	Tamaryn Jean Sawers Manta Trust
13:35	Laamu Hitahdhoo CCA	Aminath Shaha Hashim, Maldives Resilient Reefs
13:55	Q&A panel to presenters	
14:10	Break out session: Review of Forum key messages	
15:30	Day 3 close	
Conference meal and closing ceremony		
16:00	Forum closing ceremony	
17:15	Conference dinner	
18:30	Boat travel back to Malé	

2.4 Day 4: The Local Context of PCAs (only for local PCA managers)

Time	Description	Speaker
07:45	Boat travel from Male to Cross Roads	
08:15	Refreshments	
9:00	Day 4 welcome and opening	Muhusina Abdul Rahman, MoCCEE
Local PCAs – moderated by Pete Chaniotis		
09:15	Experiences from Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve	Shafee Ali, Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve
09:30	Experiences from Addu Atoll Biosphere Reserve	Video
09:45	Experiences from Fuvahmulah Biosphere Reserve	Ali Ahmed, Fuvahmulah Biosphere Reserve
10:20	Q&A Panel discussion with speakers and audience	
10:15	Break out session on local PCAs – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the lessons learnt from local PCAs • Future recommendations • Proposed solutions • Priorities • Responsible organisations • SWOT analysis? 	
11:30	Break and prayer time	
12:30	PAME training session	Jamie Small and Beth Flavell, OCPP
14:30	Break and prayer time	
15:00	PCA Management Framework and Guidance Review	Jamie Small and Sarah Allison, OCPP
16:30	Forum day 4 close and closing remarks	
17:00	Boat travel back to Male	

3 Forum Summary

3.1 Day 1: The Global Context

3.1.1 Summary

Day 1 of the PCA Forum focused on the Global Context of PCAs. The day started off with a presentation from the Government of Maldives Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy (MoCCEE) giving an overview of the current context of PCAs in Maldives. This flagged that Maldives has 91 protected areas, of which 82 are MPAs, although only 5 PCAs have formal management plans in place. Whilst only 0.06% of Maldives EEZ is currently designated, 13% of coral reef area of Maldives is included within existing MPAs. It was discussed that the land to sea ratio of Maldives causes a disadvantage for Maldives in terms of progress towards reaching international targets, such as 30x30.

Lisama Sabry from the MoCCEE moderated the following Global Context session. Pete Chaniotis from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee in the UK, started off by giving an overview of the threats to the marine environment globally. He then continued to present on behalf of the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, providing the audience with an overview of International Targets for MPAs particularly around 30x30 and the Global Biodiversity Framework. Khalid Pasha from IUCN then joined the stage, presenting on the global context of OECMs, and giving an overview of the IUCN Green List process with the support of Charlie Dryden.

After the break, Lisama presented on the progress of Maldives towards 30x30, stating that that Maldives is committed to contributing towards the global target of 30x30. This was followed by a presentation from Thailand on their work towards 30x30. Attendees were then asked to contribute to a break-out session to discuss Maldives' progress towards the Global Biodiversity Framework target based on a number of key questions; further information about these discussions is provided in Section 3.1.2.

The afternoon session focused on international delegates from Canada, UK, Korea and Seychelles sharing their experiences of PCAs in their respective countries. This was followed by a Q&A session, a summary of which is provided in Section 3.1.3.

3.1.2 Road Map to 30x30 Breakout Summary

Forum attendees were asked to split themselves into equal groups across 10 tables to undertake the breakout session, ensuring an even mix of stakeholder types were based on each table. This was facilitated by colour codes that had been applied to delegate name badges based on their stakeholder type (Ministry staff, NGOs, international attendees, stakeholders and local MPA staff). Each table assigned a note taker to record key points on flip chart paper and a spokesperson to feed back the group's key discussion points to the wider Forum. A facilitator from the MoCCEE or the OCPP team was also present on each table to guide attendees through the breakout questions.

The breakout questions included:

1. How do you feel Maldives has achieved in progress towards achieving 30x30 so far?
2. What do you hope 30x30 will achieve?
3. How do we get from where we are to where we want to be?
4. What are the challenges/barriers?
5. What action can we identify to address these?
6. How do we achieve this in a socially and culturally inclusive way?

Attendees were given 50 minutes to discuss the questions followed by 20 minutes to feedback where each group spokesperson shared their tables key points to the wider Forum.

The key points discussed by each table have been summarised below under four headings. Discussions around questions 3, 5 and 6 have been combined under heading number 4.

3.1.2.1 Perceptions around how participants feel Maldives has progressed towards 30x30 so far

- Overall participants thought Maldives is progressing well towards 30x30, noting they are one of the most active countries participating in the global 30x30 target. Maldives is also amongst the first to develop protocols for the recognition of resorts as OECMs. It is felt that there is a political willingness to progress but perception that work must accelerate if Maldives are to meet 2030 ambitions, especially concerning the effective management of PCAs.
- The communication around plans concerning 30x30 implementation has been centralised, and communication amongst NGOs, local communities, and other key stakeholder groups has been limited. The consensus was that the public are generally unaware of what 30x30 is.
- Protection measures to date have largely focussed on coral reefs and other specific ecosystem components, rather than the wider environment. This may give rise to criticism as to the degree to which the MPA network in Maldives is considered to be representative.
- Participants noted a gap in bespoke management planning and the effectiveness assessment component of the Target 3 wording; it is important that management plans are highly specified to the needs of each PCA.
- There is uncertainty around Maldives national aspirations around 30x30 and there is a need for clarity and communication in terms of what's being aimed for.

3.1.2.2 What participants hope 30x30 will achieve for Maldives

- Some participants hope for 20% protection of the EEZ of Maldives through representative MPAs and OECMs (note this is not a hard policy commitment, but something that has been discussed within government). Whereas some participants aspire for 30x30 to achieve 30% protection across Maldives.

Despite differences in total coverage a key theme for all was that 30x30 will achieve not only the designation of sites but also effective management and monitoring and will balance the need for sustainable development and conservation.

- Consideration of a nation-wide Marine Spatial Planning framework is needed, within which to nest MPA implementation planning across a range of protection levels and spatial scales, based on an evidence-based approach that utilised the potential of new technologies wherever appropriate.
- MPA implementation is needed in the nearshore and offshore areas.
- Participants hope that 30x30 has a tangible benefit to supporting the resilience of Maldives' marine environment to climate change and includes the protection of functionally important areas such as fish spawning grounds and areas that offer nature-based solutions.
- A greater diversity in the types of sites protected is required e.g., more terrestrial, cultural heritage sites, surf zones etc.
- Tangible benefits from protection to the tourism industry are needed through the safeguarding of valuable resources.
- Implementation in a way that respects and values social and cultural variation across island communities.
- Provide a pathway for engaging with local people to build understanding of the value of ocean protection and the importance of the natural environment. Particularly, helping to address the misconceptions of what a protected area is and raise awareness of their role in supporting sustainable resource use.
- It is important that 30x30 not only achieves conservation of Maldives' marine biodiversity for future generations but also provides economic benefits through ecosystem services and thus improved livelihoods.

3.1.2.3 What participants see to be the key challenges/barriers to implementation

- Lack of funding, capacity, expertise and training with which to effectively manage and enforce PCAs.
- Conflicts between local people due to perceived economic impacts, and centralised management teams.
- Political barriers and the longer-term will of Government.
- Lack of organisation and ability to act cohesively.
- Climate change
- Lack of decentralisation means limited opportunity to share the responsibility of implementing effective PCAs, though this is changing.
- Conflicting priorities between development and sustainability, and the need to communicate the need for balance more widely.
- Local consensus not reached.
- Lack of awareness of the importance of biodiversity for wellbeing and prosperity amongst certain parts of society (noting younger generation aware to some degree through channels such as social media).

- The dispersed geography of Maldives makes it challenging to reach and engage with different demographics.
- Lack of equal education and training opportunities across Maldives to build in country expertise.
- Confusion on who is responsible for different aspects of PCA management and awareness.

3.1.2.4 What priority actions should be undertaken to realise the full potential of 30x30 for Maldives

Governance

- A clear roadmap is required to define what 30x30 means for Maldives (including spatial coverage and management), next steps (including financial needs, and stakeholders) and to ensure continuity by building resilience against change e.g., political, staff etc. The case study on implementation of 30x30 in Thailand was noted as an impressive example that Maldives could learn from.
- Develop SMART targets for how Maldives will ensure ambitious national level implementation of Target 3.
- Improved coordination in government agencies.
- The implementation of a successful decentralisation programme to empower local communities to regulate their own resources and to support sustainable financing initiatives. Included in this is capacity building for local communities and budget allocation from central government. Generate greater opportunity for collaboration and autonomy.
- Technical as well as administrative governance processes.
- Increasing inter-institutional cohesion to better ensure longevity in political will to achieve progress.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Develop national 30x30 guidelines including toolkits enabling those with authority to tailor awareness raising and capacity building for local communities. The NBSAP (National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans) is the opportunity to support this.
- Increase stakeholder engagement and more inclusive governance processes with local individuals for a participatory approach. Community participation and awareness raising was emphasised as key for 30x30 to succeed – with particular groups including older generations (through the use of traditional knowledge) and woman’s groups noted. Implementation of this approach needs to be tailored as far as is practical to individual islands.
- Implement innovative approaches for awareness raising (e.g. sponsorship of football team shirts with 30x30).
- Consider the implementation of environmental champions across the Atolls to disseminate environmental information as a means to reach the elders and wider communities and provide tools and knowledge to influence the

community. It was noted the public are generally aware of the climate crisis but not so much the biodiversity crisis.

- Consider more innovative approaches to instil understanding of the value of the marine environment to Ministers in the Maldives (e.g. meetings at the coast, snorkel trips etc.; use of new data to support information sharing).

Financing

- Application of the Green Fund to effectively conserve PCAs. Currently being used for infrastructure for green tourism but not 'blue' conservation.
- Consideration of using the nature-for-debt model to support implementation of progress.
- Mobilization of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund
- Training in sustainable financing solutions that can be tailored to local specificity.
- Investment into meaningful economic diversification and climate resilient industries.

PCA Designation & Implementation

- Equitable access to, and benefits sharing from PCAs needs to be a key factor in PCA implementation moving forward.
- International and regional collaboration to support capacity building.
- Extend OECM recognition beyond resorts (e.g. surf areas).
- Consider large scale offshore MPAs that protect ecosystems to help meet 30x30 but also provide economic benefits to Maldivians.
- Work with neighbouring countries to achieve protection for areas beyond national jurisdiction.
- As Maldives has a large EEZ a marine spatial plan will be an integral part in supporting the potential of 30x30. Therefore, work should proceed to implement the marine spatial plan framework.

3.1.3 Global Experience Presenters Panel Q&A

Presenters from the Global Experience session were asked the following questions by the audience:

Q. How are MPA practitioners using satellite data / world observation data for monitoring?

- Innovative and new approaches for Seychelles are being developed in collaboration with Tanzania (e.g. smart-phone based platforms) to collate data. Skylight geospatial software for monitoring vessels (e.g. has been applied to megafauna poaching).
- Parks Canada have a partnership with Canadian Space Agency – this is currently being used to monitor ice cover but will be rolled out more widely and could explore opportunities for wider application.

- In the UK, earth observation data is being used for a range of applications such as monitoring kelp cover, linked to blue carbon and natural capital accounting.
- Lots of opportunities for the use of remote sensing data in the marine space.

Q. In terms of terminology, did the Korean approach of changing OECM to 'Nature Co-existence Area' bear fruit in terms of stakeholder buy-in and acceptance?

- The term OECM was found to not be very accessible or easily understandable for stakeholders. There have been variable responses to the new terminology (which is still draft). There is some evidence that the new term is more acceptable, but more consensus is needed.

Q. What will happen if we don't meet 30x30? What are the criteria for success? And what are the criteria for failure?

- The Convention on Biological Diversity sets the agenda for targets. 30x30 is a GLOBAL target – not necessarily a country commitment. The target should be viewed more as a driver towards progress.
- Context is important. The stats can be misleading, e.g. one country might be protecting large areas, but Maldives is protecting a really large proportion of coral (13%) in comparison to the percentage of EEZ protected.
- Buy-in and support is essential so we are progressing not just towards a target, but in a spirit of collaboration with coastal communities.
- 30x30 is not just about the percentage of EEZ that is being protected, but also the effectiveness of management of sites. Important to ensure not just paper parks.

Q. How should the precautionary principle be approached when designating MPAs?

- It can be better to take action on some data as opposed to waiting until more is known, at which point the environment may be degraded. The UK has used the approach of 'best available evidence' – working with industry, NGOs etc to build our understanding. It's important to be honest about the quality of the evidence available. Boundaries and management have evolved as we have learned more, applying an adaptive approach and building this into Government expectations and process is key.
- Precautionary principle can also come into marine spatial planning frameworks, for example, the Seychelles are using satellite and drone technology for high seas, multiple use management (e.g. tuna fishing in high seas areas).

Q. What are your individual reflections from your countries on how well you have engaged with local and indigenous communities?

- There is currently a huge focus in Canada on indigenous engagement and protected areas. There is also a broad spectrum of different indigenous MPA

types, from sites designated under Canadian law to completely indigenous led. This is a vital part of 30x30 for Canada.

- The most challenging engagement in Seychelles is not local communities, but the commercial sectors. A lot of work has been undertaken on building consensus.
- In Korea local people are consulted in development of PCAs, and incentivised e.g. ecotourism, payment for ecosystem services (e.g. rice paddy OECMs to maintain crane populations).
- In the UK there are different mechanisms to support stakeholder participation, such as local partnership forums, legislation (e.g. in Scotland - opportunities for designation by third parties, for example by researchers). Local communities have been included in advice on where to place MPA boundaries (e.g. for HPMA).

3.2 Day 2: The National Context of PCAs

3.2.1 Summary

Day 2 of the Forum focused on the National Context of PCAs with presentations delivered by individuals and organisations working in the Maldives. The day started with a presentation from Fathimath Nistharan from Noo Raajje who provided an overview of the partnership between the Maldives Government and the Blue Prosperity Coalition, a global network of organisations working together to provide support and technical expertise to implement sustainable ocean plans. Several achievements accomplished by Noo Raajje were highlighted including the Ocean Use Survey with Maldivian stakeholders and communities and Maldives first archipelago-wide coral reef assessment.

Beth Flavell then presented an introduction to the Ocean Country Partnership Programme (OCP), detailing the work that OCP has been undertaking in the Maldives. This included the development of a national framework for management and monitoring of PCAs, Management Plan guidance, and work with the Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve team focused on Hanifaru Bay MPA.

Fathimath Thasneem shared an overview of the USAID Climate Adaptation Project (CAP), which is a 5-year project focussed on tourism, fisheries and agriculture. Areas of work include baseline assessments, management plans, ecotourism development and improving governance frameworks.

Next Thuhufa Abdulla, from the United National Development Programme (UNDP), introduced the Maldives Resilient Reef Ecosystem and Economy for the Future (Maldives RREEF) project, which will be an 8-year programme beginning this year. Maldives RREEF aims to establish sustainable financing for coral conservation and develop businesses contributing to reef resilience and community well-being. Phase one of the programme will focus on Addu and Fuvahmulah.

Mariyam Rifga from MoCCEE presented on the work undertaken by the Enhancing National Development through Environmentally Resilient Islands (ENDhERI) project. ENDhERI aims to assist the Maldives Government in its implementation of new

environmental policies and transition towards national adoption of green growth atoll development that will sustain marine natural capital and strengthen resilience and recovery of reef ecosystems. The project began in 2017 and is due for completion this year. It has focused on Laamu Atoll where it has completed several baseline assessments, community outreach, management planning and supported research and conservation through a small grants scheme.

The final two presentations were presented by Aishath Amal from the MoCCEE who firstly provided an overview of CATENATE – Conservation of Atoll Ecosystems through an Effectively Managed National Protected Area Estate. The project seeks to support the development of a resilient network of equitably and effectively managed PCAs in Boduthiladhummathi Atoll. Aishath Amal then proceeded to provide an overview of other collaborations and pipeline projects including project preparations for GEF-8 aimed at establishing a sustainable financing mechanism for biodiversity conservation.

After lunch there were a further five presentations first given by Fazeela Shaheem from the MoCCEE who presented on PCA designation and the Maldives aspirations to designate more PCAs in line with 30x30 targets. Mariyam Rifga from MoCCEE went on to present on the establishment of PCA management in the Maldives, providing three case studies from Baa Atoll (Hanifaru MPA), Addu Nature Park and Fuvahmulah Nature Park, before highlighting management challenges and gaps including finance and policy recommendations. Sarah Allison and Jamie Small from OCPP then gave a short 5-minute presentation introducing the work OCPP and MoCCEE have undertaken to produce a National Framework for the management of PCAs in Maldives and a Management Plan Guidance document to support PCA management going forward.

PCA monitoring and the development of the National Monitoring framework were discussed in the next presentation, delivered by Enas Mohamed Riyaz, EPA and Tammy Noble-James, OCPP. Existing monitoring practices were highlighted and next steps including a need to standardise monitoring across PCAs. Enas Mohamed Riyaz then went on to present on PCA compliance and enforcement, detailing the legislative drivers for the creation and protection of PCAs. The statutory institutions in place for the protection and enforcement of PCAs and the regulatory and surveillance tools utilised in the protection of species and habitats were discussed, before challenges and the ways in which they could be addressed was highlighted.

The final presentation was given via recorded video by Lauren Wensel from NOAA and focused on developing climate smart MPAs. Climate tools for MPA managers which include Climate Vulnerability Assessments and climate adaptation planning were explained. This was followed by the presentation of successful case studies including Papahānaumokuākea in Hawaii and the climate vulnerability assessment undertaken there to help better understand next steps and priorities.

3.2.2 Existing PCA Projects Presenters Panel Q&A

Presenters from the Existing PCA Projects in Maldives session were asked the following questions by the audience:

Q. What advice do the panel have based on lessons learnt from the implementation of your projects?

- The importance of not being spread too thin on the ground. Choose a pilot area and use this to focus efforts and show tangible outputs which can then be used to demonstrate to communities, stakeholders and funders that it is the best approach before expanding to other areas.
- Ensure the scope of your project is not too wide and there is sufficient budget to effectively deliver each component of your project.
- The importance of communication – Noo Raajje returned to the communities they surveyed to give feedback on the work achieved so far, this feedback loop is imperative in the buy in of stakeholders over a longer time frame.
- The art of managing community and stakeholder expectations – not promising too much and having integrity on what can be delivered.
- Ensuring that time is spent in the design phase. This can be lengthy, but it ensures the project stays in scope, is legislatively robust and then can be used to communicate the output to the community.

Q. What are the differences between government and community managed PCAs?

- Government-managed protected and conserved areas are overseen and funded by governmental entities, while community-managed areas are coordinated by community organizations or individuals.
- Shared governance is dependent on several factors including socioeconomic levels, funding opportunities, local resources, and the willingness of the community. A gap analysis helps to identify where government support is needed.
- Have begun trialling approach for private sector involvement in managing PCAs.

Q. How did Noo Raajje identify 20% target for offshore MPAs?

- A prioritisation model was used, using information collected from the Working Group.

Q. Will the ecotourism assessment reports produced under USAID CAP project be published and accessible to the public?

- Aiming to publish the reports on the MoCCEE website in February.

Q. How does the MoCCEE ensure projects do not duplicate work?

- MoCCEE use a system to record projects and identify areas of synergies, and will direct the development of work to promote collaboration between projects and recognise synergies. Some components will overlap such as awareness raising activities as they are always a high priority.

Q. Has any heat resistant corals been found in research undertaken across any of the projects?

- Noo Raajje project has completed three coral reef survey expeditions across the north and south atolls. Did find some areas that had resilient corals after bleaching events. Full reports are available on the Noo Raajje website for more details.
- MoCCEE are working on research to identify species most resilient to climate change and will continue to investigate this and could explore opportunities to use new technology to understand more about climate resilient corals.

Q. Concerns about mosquitoes linked to mangroves were raised and the need for additional funding to address the issue.

- The MoCCEE agreed that this is an issue highlighted by communities and that there is an opportunity to address mosquitos through waste management and nature-based solutions.

3.2.3 National Context for PCAs Breakout Summary

Following the method described in section 5.1.2 'Roadmap to 30x30 breakout summary' Forum attendees once again split into different groups to discuss three questions centred around priorities for the effective management and monitoring of PCAs in Maldives and ideas on how to integrate climate change considerations into PCA decision making. Each table was given one out of the three questions listed below to focus on:

1. What are the priorities for effective PCA management, and what is needed to help deliver?
2. What are the priorities for effective PCA environmental monitoring, and what is needed to help deliver?
3. What steps can we take to integrate climate change into PCA decision making?

A facilitator from the MoCCEE or the OCPP team was also present on each table. Key points for each question have been summarised below.

3.2.3.1 Priority actions for effective management of PCAs in Maldives

Priority actions raised by Forum participants have been categorised into four main themes.

Communication and Community Engagement

- To effectively manage PCAs across the Maldives communication and community engagement is imperative and should be implemented as early as possible.
- Early engagement with the community allows for the PCA to develop in line with the values of that community. This bottom-up approach will create buy in and ownership of the PCA.

- Community participation in conservation will help build support for the environment and in turn apply pressure on policy makers to commit to green policies to meet community desires.
- Accessibility of information is key e.g. social media needs to be kept up to date.
- Financial commitment is needed to ensure projects have longevity.
- Inequality within communities can result in conservation being a lower priority. To address this, connections between social welfare and conservation need to be implemented as a priority.

Education & Capacity Building

- Education of the community regarding the importance of PCAs and their values is needed and should be delivered by well trained and knowledgeable PCA staff.
- Capacity and funding for the continued effective management and monitoring of the PCA beyond designation is required.
- There is a need for accessible environmental education opportunities throughout the Maldives for schools and further education to build a pool of individuals educated in environmental issues and management to take up jobs in the environment sector and increase capacity.

Governance & Enforcement

- To effectively manage and protect PCAs in the Maldives effective and robust governance and enforcement provision must be in place.
- Create policies and frameworks/guidelines that help to build capacity.
- An action plan for effective management including sustainable finance options from government and other philanthropic donors would help to guide funding.
- All PCAs need to be supported to fulfil an adaptive management approach where monitoring outputs and community input are utilised to adapt management in line with learning.
- It was noted that central Government cannot mobilise to respond to enforcement issues at short notice. Therefore, there should be more of a local / community focus to help respond to events quickly. Providing increased powers to EPA and Biosphere rangers would also help to respond to incidents quickly.
- Enforcement fines are not currently a sufficient deterrent. Other options should be explored.
- Actions to help increase co-ordination between the EPA, police and Coast Guard are required such as agreed Standard Operating Procedures to ensure all parties are aware of each other's roles and responsibilities.

3.2.3.2 Priority actions for effective environmental monitoring of PCAs in Maldives

Three main themes were discussed in relation to effective PCA environmental monitoring.

Implementation of national monitoring protocols

- There is a need for implementation of comprehensive biodiversity assessments by developing and implementing monitoring protocols and use of user-friendly materials to build community participation.
- Integrating adaptive management into environmental monitoring plans is key, responding to changes in human behaviour and activities.
- An effective legal framework that enables for the timely monitoring of sites is needed. To date, monitoring normally only takes place during the designation phase to establish baseline data.
- Legal framework needs to be adapted to call for monitoring at more regular cycles.
- Greater interaction with communities around the results of monitoring programmes is required to raise awareness of findings and encourage community buy in.

Strengthening effective enforcement

- Strengthening the legal framework for effective enforcement to address violations and monitoring. There are currently some enforcement provisions by the EPA.
- Transparency is integral – bring together data collection efforts to streamline, use effectively and identify gaps.

Research & Development

- Identify if monitoring efforts are effective and if methods are appropriate. Monitoring requirements will be unique to each individual PCA.
- Engage with stakeholders to help validate research and findings.
- Investigate cost-effective approaches and emerging technologies to support research and monitoring targets.
- Share success stories to help support future financial investments and conduct research into international best practice.
- Explore options for other protection and conservation, such as Dark Skies status.

3.2.3.3 Key considerations and steps participants believe should be taken to integrate climate change into PCA decision making

- Long lived megafauna are a valuable tool for carbon storage and therefore considerations should be made to enhance protection of swim ways and other key areas for these species.
- Identify climate refugia areas and prioritise these areas for protection.

- Use modelling data to help support understanding of how environmental changes might occur over time. Incorporate this data into decision-making around PCA management.
- Select climate vulnerability indicator habitats and species to integrate climate change into monitoring programmes.
- Prioritise important blue carbon habitats e.g. mangroves for protection.
- Undertake climate vulnerability assessments for individual PCAs to help prioritise management actions.
- Investigate what opportunities are available through the Climate Fund.
- Important to use and promote citizen science inclusion to build understanding of impacts of climate change.
- Baa Atoll reserve staff have observed an increase in manta rays frequenting the area and changes in coral cover and fish abundance. Research to identify whether these changes are linked to climate change is needed.

3.3 Day 3: Support for PCA Implementation in Maldives

3.3.1 Summary

Day 3 focused on ‘Support for PCA Implementation in Maldives’. The first session of the day focused on Sustainable Financing for PCAs, and was moderated by Muhusina Abdul Rahman from MoCCEE. Melissa Garvey of The Nature Conservancy set the scene with an introduction to sustainable financing, followed by a presentation on establishing sustainable financing in Maldives by Lan Thi Thu Nguyen of the World Bank. Juliet Neal and Osmany Salas then shared WWF experiences in sustainable financing of MPAs in Belize, leading on to an IUCN case study on sustainable financing to support the Green List process by Siska Sihombing. Delegates then contributed to break-out discussions, following the same format as previous days. Further information from these discussions is provided in Section 3.3.2.

After the lunch break, moderator Pete Chaniotis from JNCC introduced a session on The Role of Wider Stakeholders in PCAs. Members of the MoCCEE (Muhusina Abdul Rahman, Fazeela Shaheem and Haawa Junainath, respectively) presented on the integration of stakeholder engagement into PCA decision making, decentralization and the role of councils in PCAs, and the OECM process in Maldives. The MoCCEE talks were followed by presentations on the roles of NGOs in Maldives PCAs, from Tamaryn Sawers of the Manta Trust and Aminath Shaha Hashim of Maldives Resilient Reefs. Pete moderated a Q&A panel with the afternoon’s speakers (Section 3.3.3), followed by a plenary validation and ratification of the key messages of the Forum led by Muhusina Abdul Rahman.

The Forum was brought to a close in a ceremony compered by Aishath Amal of the MoCCEE. The ceremony was attended by the Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Energy, Thoriq Ibrahim, Minister of Cities, Local Government and Public Works Adam Shareef Umar, British High Commissioner to the Maldives Caron Röhslar, and IUCN Regional Director, Dr. Dindo Campilan and stakeholders. Several announcements were made during the event, including the inauguration of

government pledges, and an open call for proposals for additional Nature Parks and Biosphere Reserves. Minister Thoriq Ibrahim launched the new Protected and Conserved Area website for Maldives and the Protected and Conserved Area Handbook, which provide publicly accessible information on the different protected areas around Maldives. The website and handbook were funded by the OCPP and can be accessed at <https://protectedareas.environment.gov.mv>. Six new fully funded Masters marine science scholarships granted by the OCPP were also awarded by Minister Thoriq Ibrahim and High Commissioner Caron Röhslar. This scholarship aims to support scientific research to contribute to the conservation and sustainable management of marine resources and strengthen responses to marine environmental challenges.

3.3.2 Sustainable Financing Breakout Summary

As per previous days, delegates were asked to split themselves into groups to discuss various aspects of sustainable financing and its potential applications in Maldives. A facilitator from the MoCCEE or the OCPP team was present on each table.

The breakout questions were:

1. What existing mechanisms are there for generating sustainable financing in Maldives?
2. How well are these working and what would need to improve to enable them to provide long-term financing for PCAs?
3. Which of the examples provided by the speakers is of most interest?
4. What lessons learnt from these examples could be applied to Maldives?
5. What would need to be done?

The main themes from each question have been summarised below.

3.3.2.1 Existing mechanisms for generating sustainable financing in Maldives

- Biosphere Reserves have associated Trust Funds which administer visitor revenue for their maintenance and management. Experiences have been mixed regarding their functionality. For example, participants from Addu Atoll Biosphere Reserve reported that the current Trust Fund mechanism is not sustainable, as funds cannot be used for recurrent expenses, which constitute a large proportion of their costs.
- The Green Fund is a potential source of sustainable financing which could be utilised to benefit PCA management, however there is currently no ringfencing applied for this purpose. This is a priority area for reform.

3.3.2.2 Participants views on how well existing sustainable finance mechanisms in Maldives are working and actions to improve their effectiveness.

- The Green Fund and the potential for ringfenced conservation contributions was discussed widely (possibly via a separate Trust Fund under the Green Fund umbrella). A percentage of the Green Tax should be specifically

allocated to supporting PCAs, conservation and overcoming the current barriers that exist.

- The need for better transparency around allocation, decision-making and governance of the Green Fund was highlighted.
- PCA-specific Conservation Trust Funds entirely financed by visitor revenue are vulnerable to stochastic events such as the COVID pandemic, which resulted in no funds coming in to Addu Atoll BR and a temporary halt in maintenance and management activities. Diversification of income (e.g. part visitor, part government funding) would lessen the impact of such events in the future.
- Visitor fees could be increased for access to individual PCAs, to contribute to their management.
- Concerning the distribution of funds and resources, PCAs should be prioritised at the Maldives level to allocate these where they are most urgently needed.
- General consensus was that there should be a better balance between long-term stable government funding and short-term project income (e.g. from NGOs) in the management of PCAs. Co-financing is key.
- Decentralisation of funding and governance were highlighted as key areas to improve the status quo.
- Routes and relevance of different sustainable financing models (i.e. those used in different countries) are unclear to many of the participants and poorly understood. Knowledge about available sustainable financing routes should be improved and capacity built to pursue them.

3.3.2.3 Case studies identified as of most interest for Maldives from the presentations given on sustainable finance

- MoCCEE is already working on a national Conservation Trust Fund to be used solely for conservation-based activities. Perceptions were positive regarding the opportunities this fund could open up. For example, a better focus on education and research, and a grant process, allowing localised individuals and business to implement conservation programmes.
- A review of existing Trust Funds should be conducted to review experiences and pick out best practice.
- The Seychelles model was highlighted by various groups as a key case study to inform financing, although it was noted that improved regulatory powers would be needed for rangers if this was to function effectively in Maldives.
- The 'Debt for Nature' was recognised as extremely promising and highlighted for its potential to gain political traction on conservation in Maldives and get the attention of policy makers. Again, Seychelles was highlighted as a case study for the effective application of this approach.
- Blue Bonds were also highlighted as a route of interest, with Belize as a case study. This approach could be piloted and tailored based on the findings.

- The above approaches would help trigger Maldives to lock in long-term conservation goals, which would increase investor confidence in commitment to marine conservation.
- The importance of trialling and testing sustainable financing routes in alignment with existing Maldivian fiscal policies was noted.

3.3.2.4 Lessons learnt from the sustainable finance presentations that could be applied to Maldives

- There are clearly lessons to be learned from other countries, most notably Seychelles, however it must be recognised that there are differences in the management of PCAs in other countries.
- Public and private partnerships should be included in a practical and realistic business plan for each PCA (Seychelles can share an example business plan). Business plans need to be SMART and in line with PCA management plans.
- Iconic species can be ‘branded’ to capture attention and boost revenue and financial investment.
- Maldives also needs to learn from past mistakes to improve confidence in investment. Need better representation by a broad range of stakeholders in decision making, i.e. across NGOs, Government and private sector. Noo Raajje used as an example regarding advisory committee/s to support MSP processes.

3.3.2.5 Key actions participants identified to support sustainable financing of PCAs in Maldives

- A thorough review of existing Conservation Trust Fund practices for the Maldives (‘the good, the bad & the ugly’) would be a very useful activity.
- Further exploration is needed into the role and use of the Green Fund, associated with possible increases in visitor fees.
- The way in which the Green Fund is distributed for support of PCAs should be revised. The funds are currently largely focused on tourism infrastructure investment. 15–30% was suggested as a direct investment into PCA establishment, management and monitoring.
- Community trust is crucial and transparency is part of that trust. Various Trust Funds have been set up over several years, but it’s not clear how effectively they are managed. A study and assessment is needed to understand how effective they are.
- Regarding climate, a move in focus away from mitigation and towards adaptation (including the biodiversity crisis) is now required. Maldives has received a lot of climate mitigation funding over the years but needs to provide backing and data to convince donors that we need to invest in PCA management as well as climate mitigation. Setting tangible conservation targets for the Maldives that are SMART and link climate adaptation to biodiversity recovery will support investor confidence.

- The general understanding within the Maldives conservation community of how the different sustainable financing options work and how they could be leveraged should be improved.

3.3.3 The Role of Wider Stakeholders in PCAs: Presenters Panel Q&A

Presenters from the Role of Wider Stakeholders session were asked the following questions by the audience:

Q. Can OECMs be expanded to include surf breaks as part of the tourism sector?

- The MoCCEE confirmed there are plans to expand OECMs into local communities in agricultural and industrial islands, also to include historical and culturally based sites. Fisheries is the next step, but other areas will be explored too.

Q. What sort of trends have you seen in female stakeholder engagement over time? How do you ensure you reach niche demographics in the communities such as disabled people?

- Members of the panel stated they are encouraged by how many women are leading in these areas currently, but it can be hard to bring women to the table in the community – we need to work at a more personal level rather than formal.
- It's harder to engage the disabled community and this area needs work.

Q. Maldives has a really high quality of night skies – is there a mechanism to safeguard the skies against pollution?

- MoCCEE explained pollution is being transferred from elsewhere (e.g. current pollution from mainland India), so it's difficult for Maldives to have an impact here.

Q. How can we make sure that communities know about PCAs? Whose responsibility is it?

- The MoCCEE take responsibility for leadership of awareness raising but it is a shared responsibility amongst all agencies, organisations, government and councils working in the PCA forum to work with communities to build understanding.
- We need to champions and stewards within the communities, as the Ministry cannot reach out at the local scale.

Q. How can we establish standard protocols for data collection and collation?

- There is a Maldives Coral Reef Database – this platform needs to be strengthened and protocols need to be made more adaptive. The Protected Areas website will link to this platform. Let's strengthen existing platforms rather than re-invent the wheel.

Q. Why do you think awareness of MPAs is lacking in females in comparison to males?

- It could be related to not attending meetings and community events – we need some further socio-economic studies to facilitate better engagement with women.

3.4 Day 4: Local PCA Manager Day

3.4.1 Summary

Day 4 of the PCA Forum focused on a smaller group of attendees, which included representatives from the Ministry of Environment, the State Minister and Deputy State Minister for the Environment, representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency, local PCA staff from Baa Atoll, Fuvahmulah and Addu Biosphere Reserves, staff from the South Ari Marine Park and North Kendhikulhudhoo Council, and the OCPP team.

The aim of the day was to focus on discussions about local situations, sharing experiences and challenges. The day started with presentations from Baa Atoll and Fuvahmulah Biosphere Reserves, and a video from the Addu Biosphere Reserve team, providing an informative introduction to the discussions. This was followed by a breakout session to discuss a range of questions focused at a local level, and the completion of SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analyses per designated area. The write up of these discussions is provided in section 3.4.3.

The afternoon session focused on training. The OCPP team provided specific training on the Protected Area Management Effectiveness (PAME) process, which can be a useful tool to understand how the current management of a protected area is working, and what steps could be taken to improve the management. This was followed by a session introducing and summarising the PCA Management Framework and Guidance documents that have been prepared by OCPP for Maldives. Useful comments were provided by attendees on these documents, which will be incorporated into the next iteration of the documents.

3.4.2 Local PCAs Presenters Panel Q&A

Following the presentations by each Biosphere Reserve the floor was opened to questions which have been summarised below.

Q. What experience did Addu have of becoming a Biosphere Reserve from a Nature Park.

- Addu became a BR in 2020. Originally the designation sat under the Ministry of Environment, but now sits under the Addu Council.
- Still trying to work out how it will fit with the Council structure.
- Have developed an action plan, but it is progressing slowly.

Q. For the Nature Parks that have been handed over to Atoll Councils, what have the experiences been?

Addu

- The process has been lengthy and Addu still consider themselves to be in the transitional phase. Greater support is needed from the Ministry around increasing awareness (and acceptance) within the Council about the designations and building capacity within the Council to support the BR team. Ranger and BR staff job descriptions don't currently fit into Civil Service Guidelines, which makes HR aspects difficult.
- The Addu team received a budget for the first time last year. However, lots of uncertainty around roles and responsibilities between EPA, MoCCEE, City Council and Addu Nature Park, which needs to be clearly set out in a legally binding document.
- Another big challenge is that the Nature Park/ BR regulation is out of date – it currently refers to the designations as being under the Ministry which no longer applies.

Fuvahmulah

- There is at times a communications gap with the Ministry. However, after being handed to the Council, it is possible to communicate to councillors and other senior people more easily.
- Have had meetings between senior management and the Ministry, which has been good.
- When Fuvahmulah was under the Ministry some services were outsourced, but now it is under the Council, everything is delivered in house.

Q. If under the decentralised system, the council wanted to establish a company to manage the mangroves, how would it work legally?

- The council have the jurisdiction to develop a regulation, that would allow for management to be handed over. However, the Ministry suggested that further exploration would be needed into this.

This question led on to a more general discussion about the decentralisation process and PCA management:

- Some work of the EPA cannot be handed over, e.g. enforcement. Further discussion highlighted the possibility of having an EPA member of staff per atoll who could help with enforcement. However, need to be aware that its often easier for Councils to recruit staff than the Ministry/ EPA and so easier to get ranger staff through that route.
- Discussed non-native species and potential impacts on PCAs. E.g. introduction of lotus, ducks, and agriculture. Should be noted that local/ traditional practices are often more sustainable, for some newer introductions, we don't know the wider implications.
- Challenges of recruiting rangers was also discussed and how no one applies due to several reasons including a lack of experience or qualifications and salary concerns.

3.4.3 Local PCA SWOT Analysis Summary

Staff split into their Biosphere Reserve teams with SAMPA staff joining the Baa Atoll table and North Kendhikulhudhoo Council joining the Fuvahmulah table. Summaries of each table's discussion are provided below.

3.4.3.1 Addu Biosphere Reserve

Staff from the Addu Biosphere Reserve team discussed some of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges they face. Notes from the discussions were taken by a member of the OCPP team, and a member of staff from the EPA. The main themes that came through were around the opportunities within the Addu team, the Nature Park has come a long way in the past years, has good engagement and support from the local community, and a passionate and knowledgeable team. However, as a result of decentralisation of the management of the site from the Ministry of Environment to Addu City Council, there are a number of challenges around roles and responsibilities and the current regulation being out of date. The Addu team had a lot of ideas and suggestions around opportunities for the future, particularly around training and capacity building.

Strengths

- The site had been a paper park since 2004, was a waste dumping site. The team have developed the park and cleaned it up. Today, the park is an effectively managed site.
- The site has a range of good ecosystems – gives huge scope of things that could do in the future.
- Communities accept the Nature Park. Site used to not be open to the public, however, it has now been opened it up to local people in a sustainable way. As a result, the park has been accepted by local area, local people made a song saying they love their nature park. Turned around in 3 years!
- There is a robust education programme - 400 students from local schools were part of the clean-up process. The systematic involvement of schools in Nature Parks, really helped in changing behaviours and helped to build awareness.
- The site has an office which provides a focal point for the designation on the island. Helps people to be aware that something is happening in the atoll.
- There is significant economic potential linked to the designation, and there is more that could be developed around this.
- The BR team – dedicated, passionate and knowledgeable staff.

Weaknesses

- The designation covers a large area, it is not feasible to be able to monitor/enforce all of the areas.
- Lack of staff and resources.
- Need a process to be able monitor the site at nighttime (e.g. between 6pm and 6am) when no rangers present.

- Communication gap between Addu Nature Park and other Government offices. Unclear links between Addu and EPA for example.
- Need to standardise enforcement strategy with all PCA managers.
- Legal structure doesn't currently exist for Addu. The management regulation is void as it currently refers to Addu being under the Ministry but since the BR managed moved to sit under the council, the regulation is no longer applicable. The regulation needs to be updated.
- Need to be a more democratised system to distribute opportunities across the MPA staff in Maldives.
- After decentralisation process, sustainable financing mechanism for nature parks is a huge challenge. The current Trust Fund model doesn't work for Addu because only able to use the money for certain things, for example not able to use for the recurring costs of the Park, staff costs, etc. This is currently being covered by the Council which is causing some tensions.
- Lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities evident around staff safety. Incidents have happened and unclear whether should be dealt with by the police or EPA.

Opportunities

- Need to explore staffing roles and responsibilities. Currently all staff are involved in all roles, need to be able to work more professionally. Would be good to identify leads on different tasks and have additional training on these topics.
- Park is huge, with the full range of ecosystems in Maldives, could expand the activities offered. Have an expansion plan but want to be able to sustain the services currently offered before expanding.
- Need a systematic volunteering programme. NGOs are doing this well, aware it can bring in additional income. Explore scope for international personnel that might be interested in coming to do research/ volunteering. Hope to develop a volunteer programme from which could get economic benefits as well as helping to progress some of the research needs of the park.
- Establishment of official mechanism to coordinate and communicate with other MPA offices. Would be good to run a Parks Meeting annually to bring BR and PCA staff together to communicate, share synergies, training and experiences.
- Exploring sustainable financing models – interest in exploring the Baa Atoll model (where costs are covered by central government).
- Need mechanism to address staff safety within PCAs, streamlining addressing of offences with the police. Would need to be covered under national enforcement plan synergised with police, and regionally.
- Ranger training will be hugely beneficial.
- Need training for council staff and decision makers about conservation and PCA management.
- Want to develop species catalogue for the designation. Need to work with ecologists and taxonomists to develop a systematic approach for staff to be

trained in data collection, coral reef, seagrass, mangrove, sea birds, fish. Option to work with resorts that might have the technical knowledge and equipment.

- Explore scope for staff development opportunities, e.g. attending conferences and events, and feeding back to the wider team afterwards to share and build knowledge.

Threats/Challenges

- Covid had a significant impact on the area as a result of the sharp drop in visitors and lack of income. Currently trying to revive the park.
- Addu staff feel unsupported by the Ministry and don't feel integrated into the council.
- Real need for training – MNU courses are very centralised so difficult to get access on outer atolls. Team are keen to get training to become technical experts in their areas, they already have lots of practical knowledge but technical knowledge is needed.
- Need tailor made organisational frameworks for PCA staff as the current civil service framework doesn't currently work.
- When designing projects, need to consider the feasibility of decision making. For example, equipment has been purchased by other projects that isn't appropriate e.g. wood that is not suitable for certain environments, speedboats that aren't fuel efficient or that have too deep a draught to use in shallow coastal environments.

3.4.3.2 Fuvahmulah Biosphere Reserve

A SWOT analysis was completed for the Fuvahmulah Biosphere Reserve by two members of the Fuvahmulah Biosphere Reserve team and two members of the Ministry of Environment. A member of the OCPP team helped to facilitate discussions. The group discussed the threats, strengths, and weaknesses linked to the management of Fuvahmulah Biosphere Reserve which includes 2 MPAs and 2 wetland ecosystems as protected areas. The key challenge raised was the lack of capacity and resources available to undertake effective management and monitoring. The Fuvahmulah Biosphere Reserve Office team currently only consists of two people, both of which are terrestrial based. To address this a number of opportunities were highlighted including the need for an environmental management course and training opportunities on Fuvahmulah to build local knowledge and expertise. As well as greater collaboration with hotels and dive centres on the island to build tourist awareness of the Reserve and encourage visitation which in turn would contribute to the sustainable financing of management. Key points from the SWOT analysis are described below.

Strengths

- There is an established management plan with specific regulations for the Dhadimagi Kilhi and Bandaara Kilhi
- Fuvahmulah has an exceptional natural beauty that is unique in the Maldives due to its geography.

- Fuvahmulah has a rich cultural history and heritage.

Weaknesses

- The key weakness highlighted throughout the discussion was a lack of capacity and technical knowledge.
- Lack of staff and individuals with suitable qualifications to meet job advertisements.
- Lack of finances to sustainably manage the Biosphere Reserve - the Reserve is not generating enough money to meet running costs.
- Lack of environmental awareness amongst the local community including awareness of the Biosphere Reserve.
- There is limited infrastructure and facilities to accommodate visitors at the Nature Park e.g., currently only have two short board walks.

Opportunities

- Build relationships between the Biosphere Reserve Office and the local hotels and dive centres to support greater collaboration around raising awareness of the Biosphere Reserve and what it can offer to tourists.
- Introduce an environmental course on the island to build island expertise and capacity as well as provide more training and career building opportunities within the Council and Biosphere Reserve Office to retain skilled individuals on the island.
- Consider amending the educational threshold currently in place for Biosphere Reserve positions to encourage a greater number of applicants and provide on the job training to build skills to the required level.
- Fuvahmulah's unique biodiversity and geography provide for ample research opportunities and could support a research hub.
- Broaden the services and facilities that Fuvahmulah currently has and make them more accessible.
- Utilise new technology to assist monitoring efforts of both terrestrial and marine protected areas.

Threats/Challenges

Key threats to the sustainable resource use and management of Fuvahmulah were identified as:

- Shark feeding activities undertaken by the local dive industry that may have implications on shark presence and behaviour in the area. The dive industry has rapidly grown within recent years and contributes greatly to the livelihoods of many on the island. However, the Biosphere Reserve management team do not currently have the means to monitor and regulate diving activities to ensure the industry compliments the objectives of the Biosphere Reserve.
- The introduction of invasive species such as fish and plants to the unique freshwater lakes on the island is an issue.

- Illegal activities such as farming in the protected areas, removal of mangrove areas and the setting of intentional fires.

3.4.3.3 Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve

Staff from the Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve team discussed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in a joint discussion with the two newly recruited South Ari Marine Protected Area (SAMPA) rangers. The session was facilitated and key points recorded by members of the OCPP team. Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve is long-established with active management, therefore the team had a number of reflections on lessons learned, future directions and requirements. The main themes discussed were the importance of community buy-in and sustainable financing. There were initial difficulties in engaging the local stakeholder groups and community, which have been overcome by persistent communication and education by the team. Long-term resourcing issues were highlighted, which have limited what the BR can realistically achieve (e.g. in resourcing for enhanced education activities and offering a living wage to rangers). These resourcing limitations are particularly pertinent when considering the BR as a whole; the vast majority of resources are deployed in management and compliance monitoring of the core Hanifaru area, yet there are 13 additional MPAs within the BR. The team is working with the Atoll Council to establish more sustainable modes of financing for the Reserve to enhance the status quo.

Strengths

- Community understanding is increasing every year. Bringing stakeholders along is a key part of their success. Local communities are beginning to see the benefits of PCA conservation, given the concerted effort by the Baa BRO to engage them.
- The level of awareness is improving all the time. For example, the community now understand that the MPA is not entirely closed to activities, but can be used in a sustainable way (e.g. for bait fishing). There are three zones and the community is now aware of what is and isn't allowed.
- This level of awareness took years, with lots of disagreements in the beginning, but with time and communication the relationships have improved and become much more productive. It is a huge achievement for the BRO that they managed to get the management plan implemented, considering the stakeholder conflict (including the Dive Association and fishers).
- Recommended building relationships with stakeholders early 'to produce a drive' then engage the community. Ensure people feel comfortable sharing knowledge and tackling disagreements.
- In 2009 each household in the Atoll was engaged - at some, the BR team were kicked out. In 2014 the community was starting to see the benefits. Next community round of full engagement is planned for next year.
- Local kids are now being taken to the MPA to actually see what they're protecting – snorkel trail and dive courses are planned.

- For effective surveillance and education, having the team embedded in the local community is absolutely key. The team is well known and trusted. For example, 99% of infringements are reported to them by the local fishers.
- Baa BRO team have a very strong relationship with the Atoll Council, particularly with Ahmed Afrah, who is considered part of the BRO team, flagging how important council support has been to their success.

Weaknesses

- In Shafees experience implementing a management plan is straightforward, but only when the required resources and training are available. More commitment is needed from central government in the long term to ensure that Baa Atoll is properly resourced to effectively manage the Biosphere Reserve.
- The small Baa team is currently responsible for monitoring the entire Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve, yet the vast majority of their limited resources are focused on Hanifaru. More resources are needed to monitor the whole of Baa Atoll BR effectively.
- Difficulties retaining conservation staff and rangers due to low wages and the lack of appropriate candidates with the skills needed (e.g. 2 years ranger experience needed to apply). Funds and resources are difficult to secure for ranger training and the lack of enforcement powers downgrades the ranger wage.
- The economy is thriving due to biodiversity and nature conservation, but the money doesn't trickle down to where it's needed.

Opportunities

- The Resort forum has been a real opportunity even though it started in conflict.
- Management shouldn't be about control, but bringing the community with you, educating them on why their MPA is so important and with management how it can benefit the wildlife and the community.
- A bill is being put forward through the Atoll Council on the distribution of the Green Fund, which can be raised in higher political spheres. This will be to introduce a 30% levy on the Green Tax in Baa, to be transferred to the protection of MPAs and living wages for rangers. If this 30% can be harvested then there will be no need for other funding methods
- There is a clear opportunity for SAMPA to learn lessons from the experience of the Baa Atoll team, to make their stakeholder engagement and management journey less challenging. Baa team could host SAMPA rangers, but there is currently no plan or government financing in place to make this happen.

Threats/Challenges

- As per the weaknesses section, the main threats are under-resourcing, poor recruitment and retention of MPA-level staff, and lack of political engagement/will to improve the status quo.

- Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve Office are asked to deliver a lot without the back up of central government. Decentralisation should be the goal – but done in an equitable way.
- Environmental staff are not deemed to be technical staff – they are classed as administrative so the pay structure allows for reduced wages. \$600 per month needs to be increased.
- New rangers are needed to recruited for consistency but are only paid \$260 PCM – if they are given training and enforcement powers then they will be classed as technical staff and can be paid more.
- Communication with the community needs to be continuous. It should be rolled out to all school children in perpetuity to ensure the message is built into the community story. This needs to be resourced effectively, or becomes a threat if community cannot engage with the purpose of the MPA.

3.4.3.4 South Ari Marine Park

The South Ari Marine Protected Area (SAMPA) rangers joined in the SWOT discussion with Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve team. The session was facilitated and key points recorded by members of the OCPP team. Being newly recruited, the SAMPA team are at the beginning of management implementation, therefore the SWOT analysis was light-touch. As would be expected given the early stage of management, discussions were centred around the scale of the challenges and possible opportunities to tackle them. There is a clear opportunity for the SAMPA team to learn from the Baa Atoll experience, which should be capitalised on.

Strengths

- One of the SAMPA rangers has a long-standing relationship with Shafee from Baa, this will facilitate transfer of lessons learned to SAMPA.

Weaknesses

- There are huge challenges for the SAMPA team. There are too many tourists at one time focusing on a single whale shark, too many boats on the reef and driving too close to the reef. Visitors are often touching the whale sharks and sometimes even riding on their fins.
- There are regulations from the Ministry on whale shark interactions, but until now there have been no rangers in the field to enforce them. Now there are two rangers, but they have a huge number of interactions to cover.
- There is no limit to the number of boats, so there are sometimes 30 boats and hundreds of visitors chasing the same whale shark. Some boats have been seen driving within 2 metres of the whale sharks to get their guests closer.
- There have been some major injuries to both whale sharks and humans due to the dense and erratic boat traffic.
- Resorts give briefings to guests on how to behave around the whale sharks, but the rangers feel they aren't always well educated and can be careless.

- Another issue is the size of the area they cover. Unlike Hanifaru, where the snorkelling activity is in a fairly limited area, they have a huge area to consider in terms of enforcement and their limited resources.
- The ranger team needs to understand more about the local communities and resort management. They have not yet established good working relationships with stakeholders, as it is very early days.
- The rangers have not yet received any training in enforcement and are unsure how and when this will happen.
- Another issue is stability of the workforce. Rangers are given a 2 year contract and are only given 3 months notice of renewal. This will result in high turnover and loss of training, experience and skills.

Opportunities

- There is a clear opportunity for SAMPA to learn lessons from the experience of the Baa Atoll team, to make their stakeholder engagement and management journey less challenging.

Threats

- As per feedback from Baa Atoll, the main threats are under-resourcing, poor recruitment and retention of MPA-level staff, and lack of political engagement/will to improve the status quo.
- Ranger training is urgently required. Baa team could host SAMPA rangers, but there is currently no plan or government financing in place to make this happen.

3.4.4 PCA Management Framework and Guidance session

During the afternoon, the OCPP team presented the latest version of the PCA management Framework and Guidance documents to the group. Some suggestions were made around revisions to the documents. It was also suggested that these will remain live documents that will be reviewed on an annual basis. The OCPP team and Ministry will amend the documents to address the feedback received before finalising the documents and publishing.

4 Forum Feedback Questionnaire

For the purposes of monitoring, evaluation and learning, Forum attendees were asked to complete a short online questionnaire before and after the event to understand the impact of the Forum on their understanding, but also to gain feedback regarding the event to improve lessons learnt for the future.

Prior to running the PCA Forum, an online questionnaire was sent to all attendees, and a QR code link was also shown to participants as they arrived on the first day of the Forum to encourage participation. The survey contained 26 questions to collect initial level of knowledge and understanding relating to the focus areas of the Forum. Questions were grouped into multi - choice questions, meaning that respondents could quickly work through the questionnaire. In total 43 responses were received. The last few questions in the questionnaire specifically linked to the Local PCA Manager Training Day on 18 January, which only those attending the day were invited to complete.

At the end of day 3 of the Forum, all attendees were invited to complete a post Forum questionnaire. The survey was composed of a similar number of questions - many repeating the questions included in the pre-Forum questionnaire, to gauge the effectiveness of the Forum in facilitating awareness and learning for Maldives PCAs. A total of 33 responses were received. The local PCA staff that stayed for the fourth day of the Forum were given an additional questionnaire to specifically investigate how useful and effective the management focussed day was. A total of 15 attendees completed this questionnaire.

4.1 Summary of feedback

Questionnaires provided attendees an opportunity to provide feedback via yes/no questions and open text. Overall, 97% of attendees who completed the survey thought the venue was a good place to hold the Forum and that they would be interested in attending a similar event in the future. The content of the Forum was also thought to be easy to understand by 97% of respondents and 100% of respondents thought the supporting materials were useful. Ninety-one percent of respondents found the timings of the sessions adequate.

When asked whether the content of the Forum was useful for attendee's roles 82% of respondents agreed and said they would use the information gained in their jobs going forward. Suggestions of how content from the Forum would be used included:

- To more effectively monitor and manage existing areas
- Improving management programmes and action plans
- Establishing new Protected Areas
- OECM development and improvement
- Improving budgeting for PCAs and investigating green financing options
- Building up stakeholder and community engagement with different sectors
- Green listing and implementation

Seventy-three percent of PCA staff who completed the survey for the training day agreed it was useful for their roles. Particularly for developing and improving management plans and annual work plans as well as for learning from each other to improve enforcement practices. Survey respondents provided the following recommendations to improve future events:

- More discussion-based sessions than presentations.
- Use of more localised PCA examples from within Maldives.
- Increase the diversity of presentation speakers to include other sectors (e.g. resorts, local councils).

Recommendations to improve the Local PCA training day also included a need for more breakout activities between presentations. Respondents also wished to improve engagement through the use of more ‘fun’ activities and to hold smaller events in the future across the different atolls.

4.2 Summary of knowledge results

Key survey results showed an overall increase of 25% in attendee’s knowledge related to the global context of PCAs following the Forum. Of note was the greater understanding attendees had of the IUCN Green List Standard process and lessons learned on PCAs around the world. Figure 1 provides an overview of the differences in responses between the pre and post-Forum survey questions focused on the global context of PCAs.

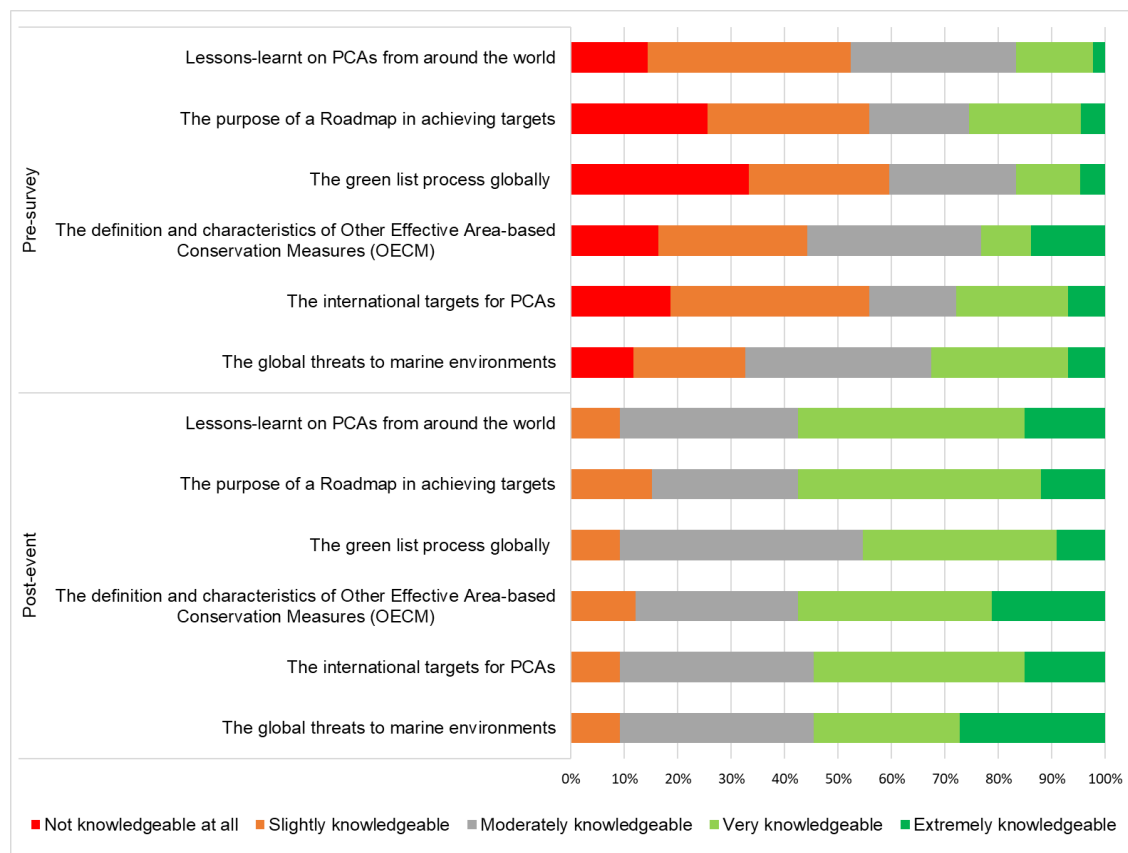


Figure 1. Breakdown of responses received in the pre- and post-Forum survey questions related to the global context of PCAs.

On average, before the Forum attendees had a slight/moderate knowledge regarding PCAs in Maldives and following the Forum knowledge increased by 26% with attendees on average rating their overall knowledge as moderate or very knowledgeable. The greatest increase in knowledge was related to attendees' awareness of existing PCA projects in Maldives with an increase of 30%. A breakdown of pre and post-Forum responses related to PCAs in Maldives is provided in Figure 2.

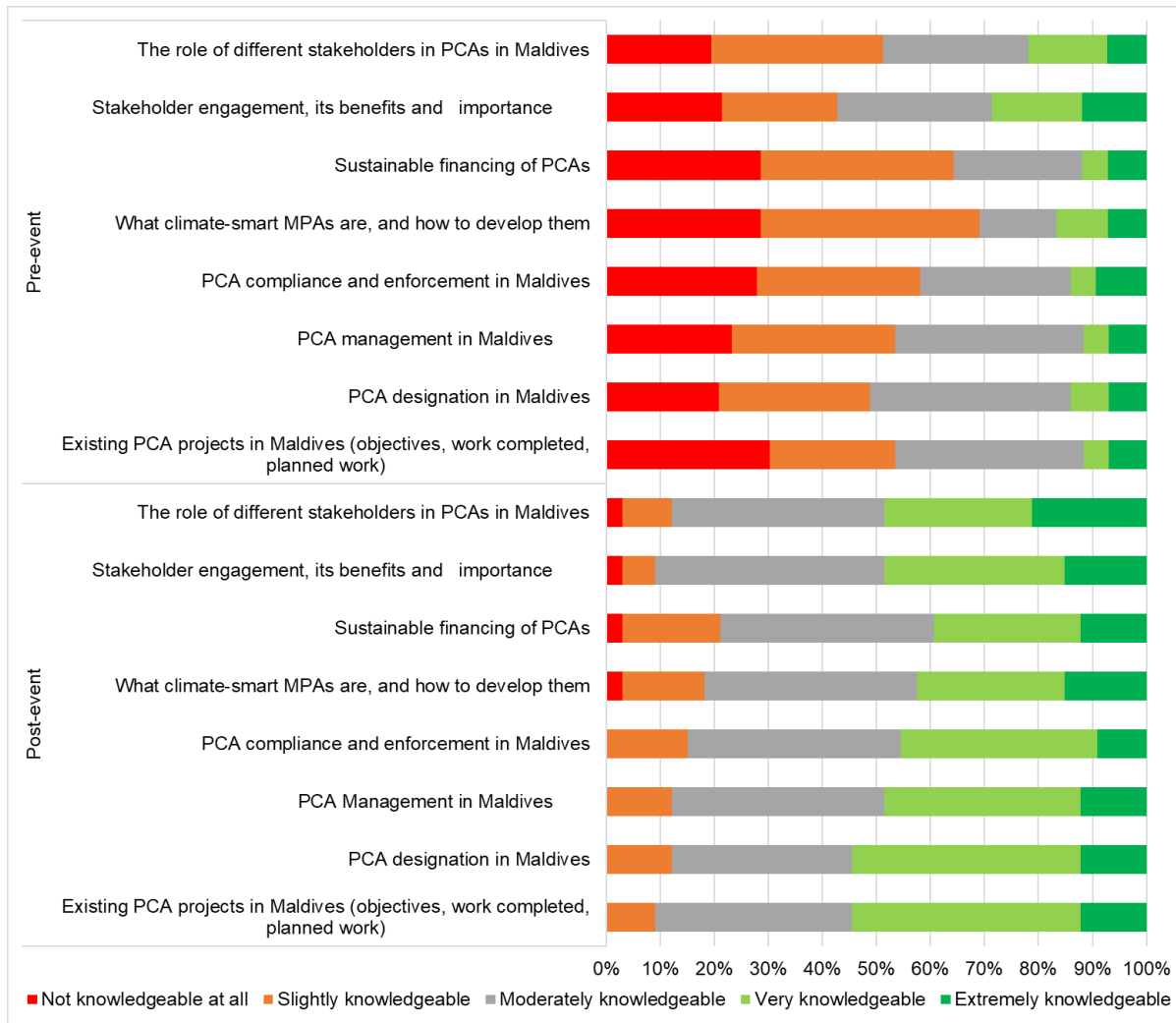


Figure 2. Break down of responses received in the pre and post Forum survey questions related to attendees knowledge of PCAs in Maldives.

Maldives' PCA staff who attended the PCA training day on the fourth day of the Forum answered additional questions in the pre-forum survey and completed a post-training day survey. These questions focussed on knowledge of the newly developed Maldives National Framework for Management of Protected and Conserved Areas and Maldives National Management Plan Guidance for PCAs, Protected Area Management Effectiveness (PAME) and challenges related to Maldives' PCAs. Before the training day attendees on average had a slight or moderate knowledge of the topics (Figure 3). Following the training day attendees knowledge increased slightly by 13% with attendees having a moderate knowledge overall an average.

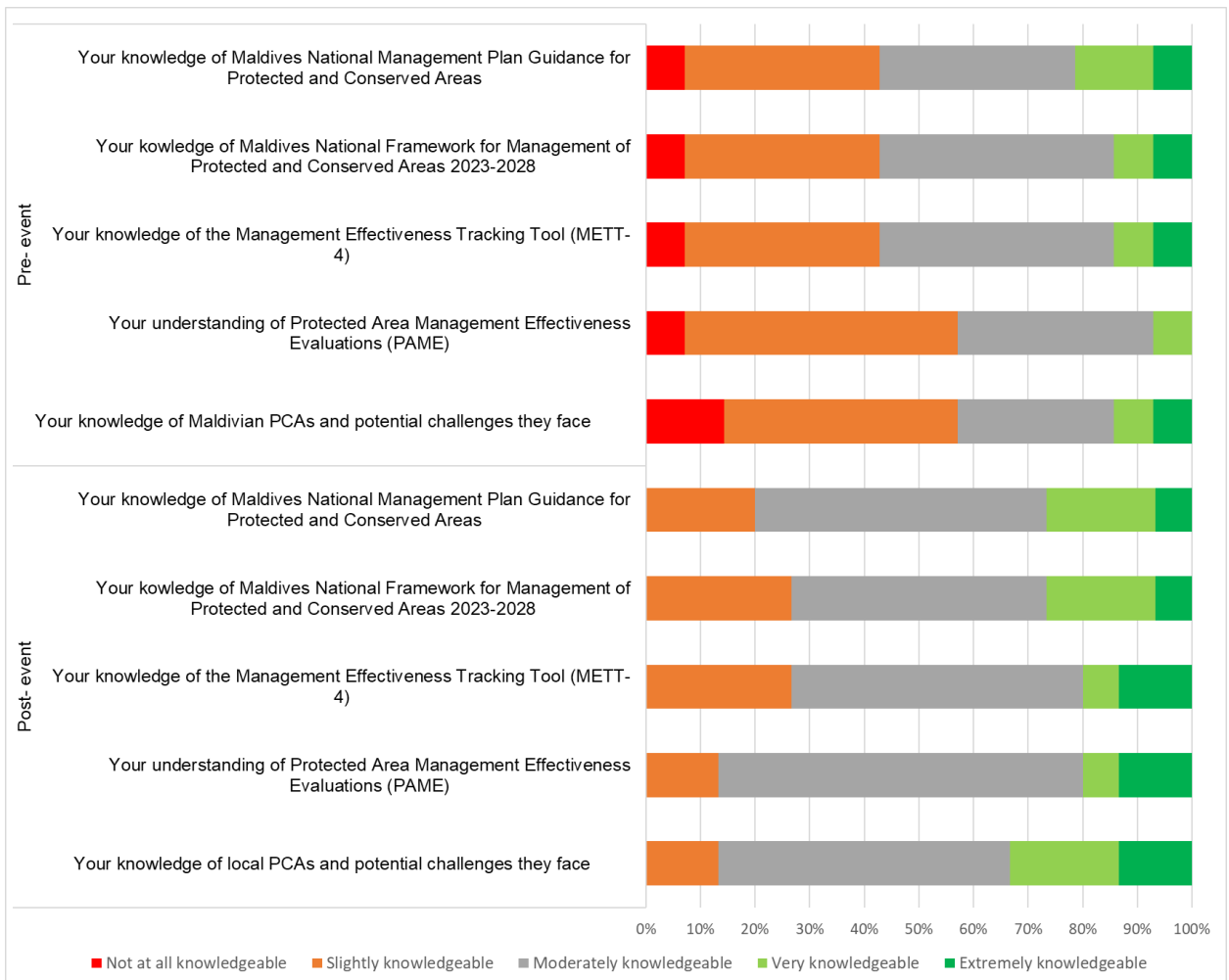


Figure 3. Break-down of responses received in the pre and post Forum survey questions for the local training day on day four of the Forum related to knowledge of management tools and challenges for Maldives' PCAs.

5 Conclusion

The PCA Forum was received well by stakeholders and provided a valuable platform for those working on Maldives PCAs to come together over several days to build connections both nationally and internationally and learn from one another. Key themes that emerged throughout the four days of discussions included the confirmation of the need to develop a clear roadmap for Maldives' journey to achieve 30x30 that defines measurable targets and outlines actions, roles and responsibilities. Community outreach and engagement as an integral component to build support for PCAs, increase political will to champion environmental protection in Government policies, and encourage greater ownership. Support for further investigation into sustainable financing mechanisms that may benefit Maldives, including learning from other countries and reviewing current mechanisms to improve effectiveness. And the need to address capacity challenges through increasing accessibility to education and training opportunities across Maldives.

The Ministry of Environment hope that the Forum will be an ongoing event which could be held every 3-4 years with more focused annual gatherings for national PCA managers in between. However, saying that the task of organising and running such a large event must not be underestimated and sufficient timelines must be put in place for future planning. The timing of this event coincided with a new Government which was very beneficial, but it was challenging to organise aspects of the event across December when many individuals were on leave due to the holiday season. Therefore, future events should consider whether a different time of year would be more appropriate to support organisation and availability of delegates. Moving forwards, it would also be beneficial to consider holding firstly an open call for interest in attending the event as some stakeholders had reached out to say they would have been interested in attending but were unaware of the event, and secondly a call for abstracts to help shape the agenda of the Forum and encourage wider input from different stakeholders. Lastly, considerations on making the next PCA Forum a hybrid event could be investigated to increase accessibility, stakeholder diversity and reduce the need to travel to the event. Although, this would have to be weighed against the advantages of having everyone in one place where connections can be built and maintained between individuals who may have limited in person contact otherwise.

The Ministry of Environment will look to incorporate the discussions and actions highlighted by Forum participants in the development of the Maldives' roadmap to 30x30.

Once again, we would like to thank delegates for taking the time to attend the Forum and for showing such enthusiasm throughout. The discussions and ideas generated by stakeholders are invaluable in supporting the Ministry's progress towards reaching Maldives' ambitions for 30x30.

Appendix 1: PCA Forum Attendee List

Name	Organisation
Abdul Azeez Abdul Hakeem	Maldives Association of Tourism Industry (MATI)
Abdul Hadhee Mohammed	Addu Nature Park
Abdulla Shibau	Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve, Baa Atoll Conservation Fund
Adam Shaheer	UNDP Maldives
Afaaz Zahid	Maldives Resilient Reefs
Ahmed Afrah	Baa Atoll Council
Ahmed Fawwaaz	Addu Nature Park
Ahmed Nijah	Fuvahmulah City Council
Ahmed Niyaz	Maldives Space Research Organisation
Ahmed Shaan	Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve Office
Aishath Amal	Ministry of Climate Change Environment and Energy
Aishath Afa	Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources
Aishath Yumna Hussain	Ministry of Climate Change Environment and Energy
Aishath Basma	Small Island Geographic Society
Ali Ahmed	Fuvahmulah Nature Park - Fuvahmulah City Council
Ali Gasim	SAMPA
Ali Sifal	SAMPA
Allen Vosrie Cedras	Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority
Aminath Afau	Addu Nature Park
Aminath Ameera	Environmental Protection Agency
Aminath Shaha Hashim	Maldives Resilient Reefs
Aminath Shazly	The Maldives National University
Benedict Agulto	Blue Nature Alliance
Beth Flavell	OCCP
Dr Bohyun Kim	Korea National Park Service
Charlie Dryden	IUCN
Dharini Samarasinha	British High Commission
Eamaan Rasheed	Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy
Enas Mohamed Riyaz	Environmental Protection Agency
Hafiz Abdul Sattar	Ministry of Economic Development and Trade
Sarah Ibrahim	Olive Ridley Project
Fathimath Shihany Habeeb	IUCN Maldives
Fathimath Thasneem	USAID- Climate Adaptation Project, Maldives
Fathmath Usra	Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy
Fazeela Ahmed Shaheem	Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy
Hassan Irash	Maldives Police Service

Name	Organisation
Hassan Rasheed	Maldives Bodyboarding Association
Hawwa Junainath	Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy
Hussain Afeef	Addu Nature Park
Ibrahim Lirar	IUCN Maldives
Ibrahim Nashydh	Addu Nature Park
Irthisham Hassan Zareer	Maldives Whale Shark Research Programme
Iujaaz Ali	Addu Nature Park
Jamie Small	OCCP
Jason Dmytro Boire	Parks Canada
Jauza Khaleel	The Presidents Office
Jenny Kate Baker	Blue Marine Foundation
Jessica Hodge	Six Senses Laamu - Maldives Underwater Initiative
Lisama Sabry	Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy
Maeesha Mohamed	Noo Raajje
Mariyam Rifga	Ministry of Climate Change Environment and Energy
Mariyam Solih	Fuvahmulah City Council
Meril Silva Olcott Manjula Amararathna	Department of Wildlife Conservation of Sri Lanka
Mohamed Rauf	N. Kendhikulhudhoo Council
Mohammad Khalid Sayeed Pasha	IUCN
Muhusina Abdul Rahman	Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy
Najdhu Adam Hassan	Addu Nature park
Najfa Shaheem Razee	IUCN
Pete Chanotis	Joint Nature Conservation Committee, UK
Prajuab Mokaratana	Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy planning (OENP), Thailand
Rajasinghe Herath Mudiyanselage Rekha Sanjeevani Rajasinghe	Department of Wildlife Conservation, Sri Lanka
Rayya Hussain	Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy
Saaif Mohamed Rasheed	OCCP
Saebyeol Seo	IUCN Asia Regional Office
Sarah Allison	OCCP
Shafee Ali	Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve Office
Shafna Abdul Faththah	Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve Office
Shahula Ali	Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve Office
Shaufa Ahmed	Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy
Shaziya Saeed	Maldives Surfing Association

Name	Organisation
Sirithon Thamrongnawasawat	Singha Estate Pvt, Ltd.
Ms Sunjoo Park	Korea National Park Service
Supranee Kampongsun	IUCN
Tamaryn Jean Sawers	Manta Trust - Maldives Manta Conservation Programme
Tammy Noble-James	OCP
Tao Guangyao	Huawei Sri Lanka
Thuhufa Abdulla	UNDP Maldives
Wanlop Preechamart	Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP) Thailand